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# Purpose of Study

The purpose of this project was to gather comparative information about legislative departments in other local government jurisdictions throughout the United States. It was designed to determine how other jurisdictions with a strong executive-council

form of government, and of comparable size and social/economic characteristics, have chosen to organize their legislative functions, and to determine what innovations or “best practices” any of them might offer from their experience.

## Methodology

### Selected Cities:

The study consultants analyzed more than 30 demographic and political variables for 65 U.S. cities. Based on that analysis, they

selected for study the 16 cities listed below, along with King County.

Primary Cities: <i>strong mayor-council form of government similar size and characteristics to Seattle</i>	Consolidated Cities: <i>city-county consolidated governments similar size and characteristics to Seattle</i>	Regional Interest:
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Baltimore, MD  
Buffalo, NY  
Cleveland, OH  
Columbus, OH  
Houston, TX  
Milwaukee, WI

Minneapolis, MN  
Pittsburgh, PA  
St. Louis, MO

Boston, MA  
Denver, CO  
Indianapolis, IN  
Jacksonville, FL  
Nashville, TN  
San Francisco, CA

King County

The City-county consolidated governments are characterized by a strong mayor-council form of government, similar to the primary cities. Although their consolidated status makes comparison with Seattle more difficult, these cities were included in the study because of their close similarity to Seattle on all demographic and

economic measures. In some cases (e.g., revenue and expenditure data), it was appropriate to combine statistics of Seattle and King County in order to achieve a fair comparison with the consolidated governments.

## ***Information Sources***

The consultant team developed a written survey, which they sent to the legislative department director, chief of council staff, or similar position in each of the study cities. The survey included quantitative and qualitative questions. Council and committee rules, organization charts, and lists of council standing and special committees were also requested.

Because of the study's short time frame, and that it was conducted during election season, only partial information could be collected

from the cities surveyed. The study team used telephone calls, faxes, and e-mail messages to try to obtain as much information as possible.

Additional information about the cities was gathered from library sources, the World Wide Web (internet), and studies conducted by municipal research groups.

## Background Information

Each city in the study is the dominant city within its county or region. Whether a city was a consolidated city-county government or a large city government in a county of many smaller communities (Houston is one of 35, Cleveland is one of 58, and Pittsburgh is one of 132) the issues they face are very similar.

Issues identified by more than 70 percent of twelve respondents as challenges/issues/problems their councils will need to address

over the next 4 - 8 years include (in order of most-selected to least-selected response): adequate funding/revenue stream; crime; neighborhood planning; regional transit/transportation; affordable housing; economic development, and aging/inadequate infrastructure. Table 1 illustrates the responses of all respondents, and the percentage of respondents who selected each issue.

**Table 1: Issues Facing Cities in Next 4-8 Years**

<b>What are the major challenges/issues/problems facing your city over the next 4-8 years that your legislative body will need to address ?</b>	<b>Number of cities responding "Yes"</b>	<b>Total cities responding</b>	<b>Percent responding "Yes"</b>
Adequate Funding /Rev.Stream	10	12	83%
Crime	10	12	83%
Neighborhood Planning	9	11	82%
Regional Transit/transportation	9	12	75%
Affordable Housing	9	12	75%
Economic Development	9	12	75%
Aging/Inadequate Infrastructure	8	11	73%
Sewer/Stormwater	7	10	70%
Growth Management	7	12	58%
Social Services	7	12	58%

Table 1: Issues Facing City in Next 4-8 Years (continued)

What are the major challenges/issues/problems facing your city over the next 4-8 years that your legislative body will need to address ?	Number of cities responding "Yes"	Total cities responding	Percentage of cities responding "Yes"
Stadium	7	12	58%
Homelessness	6	11	55%
Bridges/Roads	5	10	50%
Air Quality	5	10	50%
Brownfields (industrial pollution)	5	10	50%
Racial Division	5	11	45%
Water Supply	4	10	40%
Emerg. Preparedness	4	10	40%
Water Quality	4	11	36%
Civic Center (City Hall)	4	11	36%
Port Expansion	4	11	36%
Fire/Emerg. Medical	4	11	36%
Hazardous Waste	3	10	30%
Library	3	11	27%
Foreign Trade	3	11	27%
Education (write-in)	5		

When participants were asked about the 2 or 3 *most important* issues facing their jurisdictions, education and growth management emerged among the most common responses, for 4 out of 12 and 3 out of 12 cities, respectively. These two issues were not among the *most common* issues identified, discussed in

the previous paragraph. (Note that some cities responded only to one question or the other, so the twelve respondents are not the same for both questions.) Health care, brownfields (contaminated industrial areas), a stadium, and the impact of welfare reform were identified by one city each. (See Table 2, next page.)

**Table 2: Top 2-3 Issues From List of Issues Facing City in Next 4-8 Years**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Number of cities including this issue in its top 3 issues</b>	<b>Number of cities responding</b>	<b>Percentage of cities including this issue their top 3 issues</b>
Adequate Funding /Rev.Stream	5	12	42%
Neighborhood Planning	4	12	33%
Affordable Housing	4	12	33%
Crime	4	12	33%
Education (write-in)	4	12	33%
Growth Management	3	12	25%
Aging/Inadequate Infrastructure	3	12	25%
Economic Development	2	12	17%
Social Services	1	12	8%
Hazardous Waste	1	12	8%
Stadium	1	12	8%
Impact of welfare reform (write-in)	1	12	8%

Respondents were asked to answer this question: “If your city was to receive an award for innovation, what would you receive it for ?” The eight responses ranged from broad topics like “economic development” (Buffalo and Denver) to examples of specific innovative programs. Milwaukee’s response cited the city government’s ability to live “within its means”, providing high-quality services despite a 10-year decline in its overall tax rate. Cleveland’s response gave the city high marks for promoting cultural diversity.

Indianapolis, widely recognized for its successful privatization efforts, responded with “privatization of government services”. Houston and Nashville mentioned intergovernmental cooperation and/or consolidation efforts. Houston’s “Spark Park program” is a joint city, county, school district, and private sector park development program. Jacksonville described an electronic database of legislative information, to include laptop access to council chambers, that will soon be implemented.

## **Government Services**

The study team asked the cities whether they operate certain functions that can affect government structure and operations, or that were believed to be of interest to the Seattle City Council. They determined that:

- Cleveland, Columbus, and Nashville operate electric utilities.
- Jacksonville and San Francisco operate seaport districts, while Cleveland, St. Louis, and Denver operate airports.<sup>1</sup>
- Baltimore, Buffalo, Boston, and Nashville manage school districts, although Baltimore shares this responsibility with the state of Maryland.
- Indianapolis, Nashville, San Francisco, and King County operate transit systems.

Privatization: Eight of the ten respondents have either used managed competition or privatized some government services. Columbus has privatized parking violation enforcement and ticket processing, as well as yard waste collection. Houston is experimenting with competitive bidding in solid waste collection and wastewater treatment. San Francisco has contracted out its solid waste and zoo operations. St. Louis has also contracted out solid waste services, allowing the city to redirect some of its solid waste employees to vacant lot cleanup while reducing disposal costs. Indianapolis contracted out the management of its wastewater treatment facility several years ago. The other respondents did not elaborate about their privatization efforts.

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<sup>1</sup> Other responding cities may operate airports; the survey questions did not differentiate between airports and seaports.

Of the eleven cities responding to whether or not privatization is an issue in their jurisdiction, only Boston said that privatization is not an issue. On the other hand, Cleveland has been engaged in a “100-year struggle for control” of its electric utility and Nashville noted that its privatization efforts have been limited by opposition from labor organizations.

## **Citizen Involvement**

All of the twelve cities that responded to the survey question about citizen involvement said that their legislators receive a lot of input from constituents. They gave numerous examples of how this input is communicated. Conventional methods such as telephone calls, postal service, and personal appointments were the most common methods listed.<sup>2</sup>

Only five cities listed public hearings or community meetings with constituents, but it is likely that legislators in all the cities conduct or attend such meetings from time to time. Houston dedicates most of one of its two weekly council sessions to scheduled presentations “by persons, groups, or organizations regarding matters of public interest.”<sup>3</sup> Houston and San Francisco have both used citizen surveys to obtain feedback on government services. Our research showed that 16 of the 21 jurisdictions selected for this study have home pages on the World Wide Web (internet), and 12 include have e-mail links to elected officials. Attachment 2 provides home page addresses and related information.

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<sup>2</sup> In responding to this question during a telephone interview, a member of Boston’s council staff told the study team that all telephone calls to Boston city offices must be answered by a person, by order of the Mayor. The team did not determine whether the caller may then be given an opportunity to record a voice message.

<sup>3</sup> City of Houston, Code of Ordinances, Sec. 2-2, Rule 2.a.3.

## ***Major Initiatives***

Of the major issues and initiatives the survey cities have been dealing with in the last five years, education and new professional sports facilities were indicated by four of the eleven responding cities. (Cleveland, Jacksonville, and Nashville specifically identified professional football stadiums.) Other common issues were property taxes, crime or public safety, and economic development. Houston and Denver have both had local minimum wage initiatives in recent years.

## ***Organizational Changes***

Only four of the cities participating in this study indicated that they have experienced major organizational changes over the past five years. These changes included:

- reorganization in the mayor's office and council district offices in Buffalo;
- abolishing the Human Services Department in Columbus as well as having three different council presidents during this time;
- a reorganization of larger departments in Milwaukee that included reductions in staff; and
- the merger of Metro with King County government.

San Francisco has recently experienced some major organizational changes. A new charter became effective on July 1, 1996. The change transferred much of the power over department administration from citizen commissions, which are appointed by the mayor, to the Board of Supervisors (city-county council). It also gave the board more power to change the mayor's proposed budget; however, it reduced the number of votes needed to adopt the budget, from 2/3 to simple majority. In addition, the city's accounting, processing, and record keeping functions have been decentralized in recent years, resulting in a 30 percent reduction in controller's office staff.

# Organization of the Council

The following text is mostly a summary of information obtained from the 16 study jurisdictions.<sup>4</sup> Information specifically requested by the Seattle City Council is presented in tables and detailed spreadsheets. Some anecdotal information is provided in the narrative.

## ***General Characteristics and Structure***

Table 3 (next page) shows general characteristics and structure of the councils surveyed. The main categories of comparison are council size, manner of election, council and committee function, and organization of staff and budgets. Several items are noteworthy regarding the organization structure and characteristics of the councils studied:

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<sup>4</sup> As noted on page 5, three of the sixteen cities did not return surveys, and a fourth provided very limited survey information. Therefore, most questions have no more than twelve responses.

**Table 3: Council Characteristics**

City	Council Full/Part Time	Number of Council Members			Type of election	Quorum of full council	How often council meets	Council member's office budget	City population*	Yearly city expenditures*
		Total	elected at large	representing ward/district						
Baltimore	Part	19	1 (pres)	18 (d)	Partisan				736,000	1,555,000,000
Boston	Full	13	4	9	Partisan	7 of 13	1x /week	\$110,000 (54,000 is salary)	574,000	1,559,000,000
Buffalo	Part	13	4	9 (d)	Partisan	two-thirds	1x / 2 weeks	\$108,288	328,000	757,000,000
Cleveland	Part	21	0	21 (w)	Non-partisan	16 of 21	1x / week	\$10,000 (+ 45,000 salary)	506,000	552,000,000
Columbus	Part	7	7	0	Non-partisan	4 of 7	1x / week	none	633,000	600,000,000
Denver	Part	13	2	11	Non-partisan	7 of 13	1x / week	\$13,750	468,000	1,513,000,000
Houston	Part	14	5 + mayor**	9	Non-partisan	8 of 14	2x / week	\$225,992	1,702,000	1,452,000,000
Indianapolis	Part	29	4	25	Partisan	15 of 29		\$22,000	731,000	879,000,000
Jacksonville	Part	19	5	14		14 of 19		none or \$50,000 ***	635,000	792,000,000
King County	Full	13	0	13 (d)	Partisan	7 of 13		\$300,000	1,628,800	4,138,000,000
Milwaukee	Full	17	0	17 (d)		9 of 17	1x / 3 weeks	none	628,000	585,000,000
Minneapolis	Full	13	0	13 (w)					368,000	736,000,000
Nashville	Part	40	5 + president	35	Non-partisan	27 of 40	2x / month	\$5,400 (\$450/month)	488,000	857,000,000
Pittsburgh	Full	9	0	9 (d)		5 of 9	1x / week	budget not provided	370,000	379,000,000
San Francisco	Part	11	11	0	Non-partisan	6 of 11	1x / week	\$5,000	735,000	2,302,000,000
St. Louis	Full	29	1 (pres)	28 (w)					397,000	517,000,000

Legend

\* Source: City and County Data Book, 1996; and King County Annual Growth Report, 1997

\*\*Houston's mayor is a voting member and president of council

\*\*\*Council member's option to establish own office and staff with \$50,000 budget

### Size

Councils range from 7 council members in Columbus to 29 aldermen in St. Louis.

### Elections

Of the jurisdictions studied, only San Francisco and Columbus elect all council members at-large. In Cleveland, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, Pittsburgh, and King County, all council members are representatives of districts or wards. The other eight cities elect some members at large and some by districts or wards.

In Buffalo, Houston, and all of the consolidated governments except San Francisco, some members are elected by districts or wards and some are elected at-large. Before 1980 San Francisco's legislators were all elected by district, and district-based elections are set to take place again in 2000.

All members of the Baltimore and St. Louis councils are elected by district except the president, who is elected at-large. Both cities also have a powerful Board of Estimates (known as the Board of Estimate and Apportionment in St. Louis), a third tier of government that includes members of the executive and legislative branches of government.

### Full- or Part-time

Milwaukee, Minneapolis, Pittsburgh, and St. Louis have full-time councils. Of the consolidated cities, only Boston has a full-time council, while King County and all of the supplemental cities have full-time councils. Refer to Table \* Of those cities with part time councils, only Indianapolis and Nashville's respondents answered that the part-time status is realistic, considering what is required to accomplish council duties.

### Office Budget

The majority of council members have annual office budgets or other discretionary funds, but Columbus, Milwaukee, and Indianapolis council members do not. Jacksonville and Nashville are unique in this area. In Jacksonville, council members have the option of establishing their own office and providing their own staff on a \$50,000 office budget, or keeping their office in the legislative department and being provided with staff assigned from a central legislative staff pool. In Nashville, council members do not have annual budgets, but receive a \$450 monthly expense reimbursement.

### Quorum

In 11 of the 13 responding cities a simple majority constitutes a quorum, and again 11 of 13 councils require a quorum to hold a meeting. Of the three remaining cities, two require a quorum to take action, and the third requires a quorum to hear legislation.

### ***Major Non-Council Legislative Functions***

There are many interesting differences among the cities regarding which major functions are included in the legislative department:

- Clerk functions are similar across cities, except that Milwaukee's clerk supervises the municipal television function.
- In Columbus, the legislative department includes the City Treasurer, Convention and Visitors Bureau, and Arts Council.
- Denver and Buffalo's legislative departments include an Office of Telecommunications.
- San Francisco's legislature supervises the Transit Authority.
- King County's legislature includes a hearings examiner, taxpayer complaint office, and an ombudsman.
- King County and Pittsburgh councils each have 4 full-time public information/media staff.

- Cleveland, Indianapolis, and King County have their own legal counsel, separate from the Mayor's or City Attorney's Office.
- San Francisco has a Legislative Budget Office, which has been operated by a company as an independent contractor since 1979.

### ***Leadership and Priority Setting***

There are many approaches to priority-setting. Some cities have adopted long-term plans that form the basis for short-term priorities. Councils set short-term priorities in some cities, while the executive branch sets priorities in others. The process used may be formal or informal.

Only Buffalo, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, and King County reported that their legislative bodies have developed a long-term strategic plan or agenda. Buffalo and Pittsburgh councils developed their plans in collaboration with their mayors.

Denver's council identifies a single main priority for the upcoming year during an annual retreat that excludes staff. In 1996 the council's main priority was a reorganization of the Police Department. This year it is to address the issue of a comprehensive plan for the City and County of Denver.

The Columbus council establishes its priorities by working within a comprehensive plan adopted in the 1980s. The staff director noted in his response that the council does not hold any retreats since any gathering of a majority of its members must be announced and open to the public.

Cities in which the legislative and executive branches cooperate to set priorities use a variety of procedures to do so. In Minneapolis

the mayor and council work together to establish priorities. Each year, Baltimore's council identifies 5 priorities, to which the mayor responds with 10 objectives addressing those priorities. In contrast, in Columbus and Houston the mayor identifies issues and the council chooses which to address. Houston also incorporates the budget process in prioritization of their activities, as does Pittsburgh.

Some respondents did not attribute a role in priority-setting to the executive branch. In Cleveland, a subset of the council develops an "action plan" or "rules and schedule." In King County, council committees are created to address priorities. Each member of Boston's council sets a personal legislative agenda, and the council deals with current issues as they are brought up by members.

### ***Legislative-Executive Relationship***

Most cities identified their relationships between their legislative body and the executive as "polite/cordial" or "collaborative", or both, over the past 4 years and in the previous 5 years. Only four of the cities indicated consistent relationships between the Council and the executive over the entire eight year period

King County's government is structured to clearly separate the executive and legislative functions. However, the county executive participates in the Legislative Steering Committee, which coordinates and directs the county's advocacy efforts at the state legislature.

Baltimore's legislative-executive relationship is unusual. The city's Board of Estimates is composed of legislative and executive officers, and it is perceived to be Baltimore's most powerful

governing body. It consists of the president of the city council, the mayor, the city comptroller, the city solicitor, and the director of the Department of Public Works. Although the council president sets the agenda and presides at board meetings, the mayor has greater board influence since s/he appoints the solicitor and the public works director. (The comptroller is elected at-large.) The city's budget is proposed by the mayor, amended and approved by the Board of Estimates, then sent to the city council. However, the version sent to the council contains only general information--no specific details as to the number of staff or amounts for individual programs.

### ***Impact on Legislative Staff***

Of the ten cities responding, five said that their legislative-executive relationship has had no impact on how their legislative body is staffed. Houston has no independent legislative research staff resource, perhaps due in part to the mayor's role as council president. Council members may also have concerns about staff neutrality in controversial issues.

Of the other five responses, two cities stated that the legislature's need for independent analysis and support led to the creation of their legislative research staff positions. A third city said the legislative-executive relationship may influence the characteristics looked for when hiring council staff. The remaining two responses spoke to the free flow of information and the ability to focus on issues and solid information instead of politics.

Denver and Boston each employ a full-time council-mayor liaison. In Denver this person functions as the mayor's lobbyist to the council. Denver's council president told the study team that the current mayor, who is very proactive, usually presents issues to the

council for its input before they progress too far. When this has not happened, projects have become stalled. A new jail facility was mentioned as an example of a project that was delayed until the council was included.

Eight cities responded about changes to the council or legislative department functions, and the areas where they would like to make improvements. Most of the responses reflected one or both of the following themes: 1) improve communication and collaboration among council members, and between the legislative and executive functions, and 2) provide additional technical and clerical support to committees. One response suggested that streamlining and reducing the number of committees would be helpful (11 in the jurisdiction), since it would give council members more time for constituent work.

Regarding the second theme, readers should recall that most of the surveys were completed by legislative staff directors. The study team found these responses to be well reasoned, though, rather than simple appeals for more staff. For example, both the communication and staff themes appear in the following response: "Increase technical staff for committees' effectiveness so council and administrative liaisons would be in place with directors of departments to make them aware of council's position on issues regarding their department. Information should be disseminated to all levels."

### ***Position of Council President***

Presidents typically determine agendas, preside over meetings, and assign committees, but the degree of authority versus consensus decision-making varies. The part-time councils' presidents appear to have greater authority within council and share more in the executive and administrative functions than full-time councils'

presidents. In fact, Houston's mayor *is* the presiding officer of its part-time council, with voting privileges but no veto power. A recent rule change requires the chairperson of King County's full-time council to be more responsive to the broad range of council members' interests.

Five of the six full-time councils elect the council president from among their membership; St. Louis's president is elected at-large. Boston's council members serve 2-year terms, but elect a new president each year.

Five of the ten part-time councils elect a president from the elected membership. Denver and Jacksonville do so annually, although council terms are 4 years. Presidents of the other five part-time councils are elected at-large, in a variety of ways. In San Francisco, the member who received the most votes in the last election is president. Houston's council president is elected at-large, since s/he is also mayor.

The leadership structures of councils among the jurisdictions were quite varied. Survey respondents had several response choices, and several wrote in other descriptions or elaborated on their answers. Three cities reported that power is closely held and wielded by the council president, four others said their councils

have 1-3 strong leaders. Jacksonville has a strong council president, but his willingness to collaborate with other members

was identified as a source of much of that strength. Two cities reported that all of their legislators are independent and outspoken; one of these said they were able to work together, while the other indicated its legislators were not as harmonious.

Legislative staff directors were asked what, in their opinion, contributes most to the council president's effectiveness. Of ten responses, eight referred in some way to the president's ability to collaborate with other council members. Typical remarks included, "ability to work with all council members without offending", "loves open dialogue and brainstorming", "brings opposing sides of an issue together", and "ability to understand and respond to broad interests of council members". The other two brief responses referred to the president's intelligence and dedication, respectively.

Milwaukee's response included "longevity in office (29 years); third term as council president". Ability to "protect council interests when appropriate with respect to the executive branch" was also listed.

Only five cities responded when asked what would make the Council president more effective. Unfortunately their responses spoke to personal attributes rather than providing substantive answers regarding budgets, staff, rules, or organizational structure, and were thus of no value to the study. Table 5, next page, shows comparison data regarding council presidents.

**Table 5: Characteristics of Council Presidents**

City	Full or part time council	How elected	Council term	President's term	Maximum number of terms	Additional resources	Officer supporting council president
Baltimore	Part	at-large	4 years	4 years		staff, as a member of the Board of Estimates	vice-president (elected by council)
Boston	Full	by council	2 years	1 year	no limit	additional \$30,000 more staff	none
Buffalo	Part	at-large	4 years	4 years	no limit	\$150,000 budget, including 2-4 extra staff	none
Cleveland	Part	by council	4 years	until replaced	no limit	none	none
Columbus	Part	by council	4 years	4 years	no limit	none	president pro tempore
Denver	Part	by council	4 years	1 year	1 (1 year)	2 staff members (others have 1)	president pro tempore
Houston	Part	at large (mayor is council president)	2 years	2 years	3 (6 years)	typical mayoral staff	mayor pro tempore (appointed by mayor)
Indianapolis	Part	by council	4 years		no limit	none	majority or minority party leader
Jacksonville	Part	by council	4 years	1 year		extra travel expenses; 1 full-time exclusive staff	president pro tempore
King County	Full						
Milwaukee	Full	by council	4 years	4 years	no limit	staff assist / clerical assist \$3,500 expense account	none
Minneapolis	Full						
Nashville	Part	at-large (vice-mayor)	4 years	4 years	2 (8 years)	none	president pro tempore
Pittsburgh	Full	by council and mayor	4 years		no limit	none	president pro tempore
San Francisco	Part	at large (most votes in last election)	4 years	2 years	1 (2 years)	none	
St. Louis	Full	at large					

## **Council Committees<sup>5</sup>**

The structure, operation, and staffing of council committees varies widely from city to city. For example, the number of council standing committees ranges from 5 in San Francisco (with 11 council members) to 23 in Houston (with 14 council members).

Ten jurisdictions indicated that committees are organized around departments, but eight of those indicated other organizing principles as well. The responses suggest that committees in most cities correspond to a combination of departments, functions, issues, and areas of council interest. For example, King County organizes committees around regional issues and organizational considerations. Milwaukee and Jacksonville said their committees are organized by function or service type, but that they correspond closely to departments. In Minneapolis, all departments are assigned to a particular committee.

Denver's council committee responsibilities include a combination of departments, boards, issues, and events. For example, some of the Human Services Committee's responsibilities are: Health & Hospitals Department, Department of Social Services, Denver Housing Authority, Housing Trust Council, homeless issues, Regional Air Quality Commission, and education issues.

Other cities provide different perspectives on how to organize city business. For example, Jacksonville combines economic development and telecommunications in one committee. Milwaukee has a Judiciary and Legislation Committee that is mainly charged with acting on claims against the city. It also has a powerful Steering and Rules Committee that sets the agenda of the overall council.

Table 6 , which follows, illustrates some operational characteristics of the council committees in the surveyed jurisdictions.

Table 7 summarizes many quantifiable characteristics about the council committees of 13 jurisdictions, including the number of standing committees, number of council members per committee, what constitutes a committee quorum, and how council committees are staffed.

Table 8 presents a compilation of the standing committees for 13 cities, plus King County.

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<sup>5</sup> Unless otherwise specified, information in this section of the report is based on responses from 13 jurisdictions: Boston, Buffalo, Cleveland, Columbus, Denver, Houston, Indianapolis, Jacksonville, Milwaukee, Nashville, San Francisco, and King County..

**Table 6: Operational Characteristics of Council Committees**

City	Number of Council Members	Full/Part Time Council	Number of Standing Committees	# of Council Members per Committee	Committee Quorum	Number of Staff for Committees	How Staff Are Assigned
Baltimore	19	Part					
Boston	13	Full	21	5	majority	as needed	legislative aide, administrative assistant, chief of staff
Buffalo	13	Part	7	6	majority	2	chief of staff of common council makes committee staff assignments
Cleveland	21	Part	11	8-10	majority	1 (reports to chair)	policy staff and council staff
Columbus	7	Part	11	4	1 (chair)	1-2 (see next column)	7 central research staff specialize in particular issues or topics, and may participate on any committee at any time
Denver	13	Part	10	4 or 5	no rules	1	staff director assigns
Houston	14	Part	23	3-10	3 including the chair	2	committee chair's personal staff + 1 member of mayor pro tem office staff
Indianapolis	29	Part	12	4-7	majority	0	
Jacksonville	19	Part	7	7	majority	1	Council Secretary assigns
King County	13	Full	11		majority		
Milwaukee	17	Full	8	5	majority	1 committee staff 1 agenda clerk	personal staff, fiscal and legislative analysts are assigned as needed
Minneapolis	13	Full	10	3-13	majority (or 50%)		
Nashville	40	Part	11	6-14	none required	as needed	Research and Planning Committee staff
Pittsburgh	9	Full	8	9	majority	no answer	no answer
San Francisco	11	Part	6	3	majority	1	City Clerk assigns
St. Louis	29	Full					

**Table 7: Council Committee Characteristics**

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Other cities</b>		<b>Seattle</b>
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	
Council committee structure can change	6	7	Yes
Committee chairs can change their committee's name	2	11	Yes
All council members must serve on at least one committee	7	6	Yes
All council members must chair a committee	3	10	Yes
Council members must rotate committee chair positions *	1	11	Yes
Council committees have alternate members	2	11	Yes
Each council committee has a separate budget	0	13	No
The mayor has a role on or with at least one council committee	1	12	No

\*one city did not respond

**Table 8: Council Standing Committees**

Baltimore	Boston	Buffalo	Cleveland	Columbus	Denver	Houston	Indianapolis	Jacksonville
no information	Whole	Claims	Finance	Development	Business Issues	Aviation	Committee on Committees	Finance & Administration
	City & Neighborhood Services	Civil Service	Public Utilities	Finance & Administration	Denver International Airport	Business & Tourism	Administration & Finance	Land Use & Zoning
	Education & School Matters	Community Development	Public Services	Health & Human Services	Finance	Competitive Bidding	Capital Asset Management	Public Health & Safety
	Elderly	Education	Community & Economic Development	Housing	General Government	Council Rules	Community Affairs	Public (Human) Services
	Economic Development & Transportation	Finance	Public Safety	Parks & Recreation	Human Services	Customer Service & Initiatives	Economic Development	Public Utilities
	Environmental & Historic Preservation	Legislation	Legislation	Public Service	Intergovernmental Relations	Education	Metropolitan Development	Recreation & Community Development
	Equity	Rules	Aviation & Transportation	Rules & Reference	Land Use	Environmental Concerns	Municipal Corporations	Rules
	Government Operations		Public Parks, Property & Recreation	Safety & Judiciary	Public Amenities	Ethics	Parks & Recreation	
	Public Safety		Waterfront & Downtown Development	Solid Waste	Public Safety	Fiscal Affairs	Public Safety & Criminal Justice	
	Housing		City Planning	Utilities	Public Works	Human Relations	Public Works	
	Labor		Health & Human Services	Zoning		International Trade	Regulatory Research & Review	
	Post Audit & Oversight					Labor/Poor Homelessness	Rules & Public Policy	
	Public Health					Legislative		
	Banking & Community Investment					MWBE		
	City & Neighborhood Services					Neighborhood Planning & Protection		
	Rules & Administration					Ordinance (Annexation Extraterritorial Jurisdiction Issues		
	State & Federal Relations					Parks		
	Tourism					Public Health		
	University & Community Relations					Redevelopment & Revitalization		
	Veterans					Regulatory Affairs		
	Ways & Means					Sexually Oriented Business		
						Wrecker		
						Youth Violence & Gangs		

(Table 8 continued)

King County	Milwaukee	Minneapolis	Nashville	Pittsburgh	San Francisco	St. Louis
Committee of the Whole	Finance & Personnel	Community Development	Budget & Finance	Finance & Budget	Budget	no information
Budget & Fiscal Management	Utilities & Licenses	Intergovernmental Relations	Codes, Fair & Farmers Market	Public Works, Water & Environmental Services	Economic Vitality & Social Policy	
Commerce, Trade & Economic Development	Judiciary & Legislation	Public Safety & Regulatory Services	Health, Hospitals & Social Services	Planning Zoning & Land Use	Health, Public Safety & Environmental	
Committee for Unincorporated Areas	Public Safety	Transportation & Public Works	Parks, Library, Recreation & Auditorium	Housing, Economic Development & Promotion	Housing & Land Use	
Growth Management	Economic Development	Ways & Means/Budget	Personnel, Public Information, Human Relations, Housing	Lands, Buildings & Procurement	Government Efficiency & Labor	
Housing & Policy Planning	Zoning, Neighborhoods & Development	Zoning & Planning	Planning, Zoning, Historical & Port Authority	Parks, Recreation & Youth Policy	Rules	
Law, Justice & Human Services	Public Improvements	Claims	Public Safety, Beer, Wine & Whiskey	Public Safety Services		
Management, Labor & Customer Services	Steering & Rules	Elections	Public Works	Engineering & Construction		
Transportation		Rules	Rules, Confirmations, Public Elections, Aviation	Hearings		
Utilities & Natural Resources		Taxes	Education			
Employment			Traffic & Parking			

### ***Committee Characteristics and Structure***

#### Size

The number of council members per committee varied considerably. For example, San Francisco's committees usually have just 3 members, while Nashville's range from 6 to 14 of its 40 council members. Cleveland, Columbus, and Minneapolis indicated they can have committees on which all council members serve; for example, Columbus's Zoning Committee consists of the entire council. All of Pittsburgh's nine council members serve on its eight standing committees.

#### Appointments

In all but one of the cities, the council president assigns council members to committees. In Minneapolis, committee members are appointed by a majority vote of the council.

Several jurisdictions indicated that council members' preferences, skills, and even seniority are sometimes taken into consideration by the council president when making committee assignments. For example, Houston said its council members inform the mayor/council president of their preferences, so assignments are somewhat self-selected. Denver's council president has

distributed survey forms to members regarding their committee interests.

### Chair

Most committee chairs in most cities are appointed by the council president. Several cities have one or two committees that, by ordinance or rule, are always chaired by the council president. Nashville is the only study city where committee chairmanship must rotate.

### Quorum

The major difference identified in rules of order about committee quorums was between those cities where the chair is technically considered to be the entire committee, so his or her vote alone is sufficient to take action (Columbus), and the 9 jurisdictions that operate by simple majority in committee. King County switched from the “lone chair” rule to simple majority in 1997.

### Rules

Nine jurisdictions have written committee rules, including 3 where committee rules are either addressed in a separate section of the council rules, or general council rules expressly apply to committees as well.

### Budgets

All of the responding cities indicated that their committees do not have distinct budgets.

## ***Advisory Boards and Commissions***

All twelve cities that responded to the survey have advisory boards or commissions.<sup>6</sup> Table 9 (next page) identifies whether the mayor, council, or both appoint or confirm board and commission members. In 4 of the 5 consolidated cities that responded, both council and the mayor make these appointments; whereas in the primary cities, 4 are appointed by the mayor, 1 by the council, and 2 by both the council and the mayor. Appointments in 5 of the 7 primary cities are confirmed by the council.

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<sup>6</sup> The information presented regarding advisory boards and commissions includes information on Baltimore, but not about King County or Jacksonville, resulting in a study population of 12 cities instead of 13.

**Table 9: Advisory Board or Commission Member Appointments**

Appointed by:			Confirmed by:			
Mayor	Council	Both	Mayor	Council	Both	Other
Baltimore Cleveland Columbus Houston	Milwaukee	Buffalo Pittsburgh		Baltimore Buffalo Cleveland Columbus Houston Milwaukee	Pittsburgh	
Nashville		Boston Denver Indianapolis San Francisco		Nashville San Francisco	Denver Indianapolis	Boston (not confirmed)

### ***Council Staff and Support Services***

Staff support to councils can come from many places, and reporting the relationships proved to be complex. It was difficult to distinguish between personal staff, central staff, and committee staff; policy and administrative staff; and shared executive and legislative staff. For example, central staff are assigned to committees in some cities, while in others, the committee chair's

staff--who may be personal staff or assigned central staff--serve as committee staff.

Nine of the 13 cities responding to questions about council staffing stated that they have a legislative department director, and

Boston said that this function is shared by its Chief of Research and the Staff Director for Central Staff.

The type and number of council staff in the study cities varies greatly. While a couple of cities do not provide any staff directly to council members (Nashville and Indianapolis), and a few cities provided only one (Cleveland, Columbus, and Milwaukee), most cities provided 2 or more.

The six cities we have the most complete data on have an average of over 76 analytical (central policy staff and audit staff) and personal staff assisting them in their legislative oversight function. Councils had between 6 and 15 administrative staff. A number of Councils had public information officers and a few had their own legal counsels. (Table 10 provides more details)

**Table 10: Councils with Public Information Officers and Councils with Legal Counsel**

Councils with Public Information Officers (number of staff)	Councils with their own legal counsel:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boston (staff number not provided)</li> <li>• Buffalo (provided by County)</li> <li>• Cleveland (1)</li> <li>• King County (2 government relations, 2 media relations)</li> <li>• Milwaukee (11.5 in the Public Relations and Communication Section)</li> <li>• Pittsburgh (4)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• King County (2 on contract)</li> <li>• Indianapolis (contract)</li> <li>• Cleveland (6)</li> </ul>

Organization charts provide a more complete and concise picture of each city's council structure and staff relationships. Many of the study cities do not have organization charts of their legislative and executive branches. Those that were submitted are included, along with city-wide organization charts, in a separately bound addendum: "Supplemental Information for Selected Cities".

# Attachment 1: Roles and characteristics of council and its officers, mayor, and other offices

## BALTIMORE

Baltimore is not a city-county consolidated government; however, it is considered to be an independent local government within the state of Maryland, not within the jurisdiction of any county.

**Council.** The City Council is authorized by the city charter to make laws, set the property tax rate, amend the mayor's proposed budget, and confirm nominations. Members serve the people in their districts and study and hold hearings on topics their citizens are concerned about. The council members study how proposed laws would affect the citizens, the operation of government, and the growth and development of the city.

**Board of Estimates.** The Board of Estimates is perceived to be Baltimore's most powerful governing body. It is responsible for approving all contracts for expenditures over \$5,000, supervising all purchasing, approving the budget, setting fees, and determining tax rates. The board votes on routine items in a block, and may hold hearings on non-routine items.

The board was created during the reform movement in the early 1900s to provide checks and balances on the mayor's power. It consists of the president of the city council, the mayor, the city comptroller, the city solicitor, and the director of the Department of Public Works. Although the council president serves as board chairman, the mayor actually has greater board influence since s/he appoints the solicitor and public works director. The

comptroller is elected at large, but may be removed by a majority of the council.

**Budget process.** The city's budget is proposed by the mayor, amended and approved by the Board of Estimates, then sent to the City Council. The council's primary role in the budget process is to cut the total appropriations submitted by the mayor and approved by the board. However, the budget that is sent to the council contains only general information--no specific details regarding the number of staff or amounts for individual programs. Both the Board of Estimates and the City Council hold a "Taxpayers' Night" for citizen input before voting on the budget. The council holds quarterly and yearly oversight hearings, and throughout the fiscal year can pass supplemental appropriations legislation to make any changes to the adopted budget if new revenue sources are realized. The council can affect policy by bringing attention to any mistakes or bad decisions the mayor has made, and can prompt alteration of the policies so they become more acceptable to the council.

**Mayor** The mayor appoints the city solicitor, all department directors and some deputy directors, and many members of the boards and commissions that govern city agencies. These appointments are subject to council approval. The mayor also has veto power over legislation. A vote of three-fourths of council membership is required to overturn a mayoral veto.

**President.** The council president is elected at large to a four year term. S/he presides over and is a voting member of the

council and serves as chair of the Board of Estimates. The city charter requires that the a candidate for council president have the same personal qualifications as a candidate for mayor. If the office of the president is vacated a majority of the council elects a person (who does not have to be a council member) to complete the term. The president sets the agenda for the Board of Estimates meetings, decides who is recognized, and determines when debate will stop.

**Vice-president.** By a majority vote, the council chooses from among its members a vice president, who leads council meetings if the president is absent. The vice president performs the duties of mayor if both the mayor and president of council are absent.

## BOSTON

**Council.** The City Council meets weekly to address, among other things; orders, proposed ordinances, and home rule petitions filed by the mayor or by one or more city councillors; reports of council committees recommending passage, non-passage, or other action on items previously referred to them; and communications from public officers and others. Any order pertaining to land requires a vote of two-thirds of all members of the council. Any item on the agenda may be referred to a committee for later action.

**Committees.** Committee hearings provide a forum for in-depth review and analysis of all city departments, boards, and agencies; and a vehicle for residents of Boston to address their concerns with regard to services provided by the city. When a hearing is concluded the chair, with majority assent, may submit a recommendation to the full council regarding further action on the item. If a committee's recommendation that an item "Ought Not to Pass" is accepted by a council majority, the item is defeated. If a recommendation that an item "Ought to Pass" is accepted, the item is presented to the mayor. The Committee of the Whole, which consists of the entire council, is responsible for oversight of departments.

**Council president.** The council president is elected by the council annually. There is no term limit, and it is not unusual for a council president to serve 4-7 years (assuming s/he is re-elected to the council). The president presides at meetings of the council and the Committee of the Whole, decides all questions of order and all questions relating to the priority of business, enforces rules of administration, monitors central staff, and acts as a liaison to the mayor and department heads. The council president also assigns members to standing committees, based on the skills and interests of the council members. Relative to other council members, the president has an additional \$30,000 budget and additional staff.

**Council vice-president.** The president selects a president pro-tempore to act in his or her absence and serve as vice-chair of the Council of the Whole.

**Mayor.** The mayor has fifteen days to veto items passed by the city council. Written objections must accompany every veto. A two-thirds majority of council will override the mayor's veto.

## BUFFALO

**Council.** The Common Council is the judge of the qualifications of its members and determines the rules of its own proceedings. Normally, public hearings are held, so citizens have input.

**President.** The president presides at all meetings of the council, appoints all regular and special committees, and may appoint (and/or remove) a council secretary.

## CLEVELAND

**Council.** All of the City Council's 21 members are elected from wards. Members address ward services and policy through ordinances and resolutions. Council meetings are public. All persons hired to serve the council must be confirmed by a majority of council.

Although all 21 incumbents were re-elected in 1993, nearly half had been replaced before the 1997 elections after being elected to other offices in the city and county.

**Budget process.** The council has one month to review and approve the “Mayor’s Estimate”. The council has never disapproved the budget, although it has that power. The council’s disapproval can be vetoed by the mayor, which can be overturned by a two-thirds majority of the council.

The budget process gives the council some influence over the mayor’s handling of departments and choices of appointees, despite that it has no confirmation powers.

**Committee of the Whole.** It is very rare for the council to act as a Committee of the Whole. The rules that apply are very similar to the extent of powers of the council in regular session, and the president continues to preside unless there is an objection. However the committee of the whole can enact laws in an expedited manner if a two-thirds majority agrees to suspend the rules regarding times of presentation for consideration, adoption, or enactment.

**Council president.** The President of Council presides over the council in the manner of a Speaker of the House to Congress. The president is elected from the membership to an unlimited term, and serves at the will of the council. (According to a staff member, there have only been two presidents in the last 25 years.) The president is a voting member of the council. S/he sets the council agenda and appoints committee members and chairpersons, a majority leader, and majority whip.

**City Clerk.** The City Clerk keeps the records of the council, and is editor of the City Record. The clerk serves an indefinite term; the city council elects a new clerk when the position becomes vacant. The clerk is usually chosen from the council membership (whereupon the chosen member must resign from the council), or from council staff, but there are no restrictions against choosing a person from outside the legislative branch. According

to a staff member, there have been only two city clerks in the last 25 years.

**Council vice-president.** There is no standing office secondary to the council president. If the president is absent from a meeting, the city clerk calls the meeting to order and a President of Council pro tempore is elected. The president pro tempore has all powers and duties of the president until the president arrives or until the end of the meeting..

## COLUMBUS

**Council.** The council is the legislative authority for the city and considers and approves (in conjunction with the mayor) resolutions and ordinances, to enact new “law,” or to enact any legislation necessary for the operation of the city. It is also responsible for appointing the city clerk and the city treasurer. Any member may attend any, and all, meetings and committee meetings of the council, including executive sessions. The Council adopts the operating and capital budgets; reviews and approves certain contracts (anything over \$10,000 requires council approval); addresses zoning issues and appeals; and enacts Columbus city codes. In addition to fiscal control and regulatory authority, the council establishes land-use policy through zoning codes

**Council president.** The president of the council is elected by the membership after each regular municipal election, to preside at meetings, preserve order and decorum, decide all questions of order, and has the authority to see that all officers and employees perform their respective duties. The president also appoints all members and chairpersons to standing committees.

**President pro tempore.** The president pro tempore is elected at the same time as the president.

## DENVER

**Council.** The City Council makes laws, budgets city money, and can investigate city agencies and employees. Any member of council found absent for four successive meetings, unless excused due to sickness, is removed from council.

**Council president.** The president presides over council meetings; appoints all committees; refers all bills, resolutions and memorials to the appropriate standing committees; signs all bills, resolutions, and memorials passed by the council; and receives all messages and communications from departments. S/he is eligible to vote on all questions; and is an ex-officio member of all committees.

The president's mission, according to the current president, is to provide: an atmosphere of trust and accessibility for the council, the tools for council members to accomplish their goals, and an open and fair process to develop the best public policy.

**Council vice-president.** If the president is incapacitated or at the president's request, the president pro-tempore has all of the powers and authority of the president.

## HOUSTON

**Council.** The council's responsibilities include: approve legislation, motions, contracts and resolutions; hold hearings, and recognize citizens, organizations, and special events. The members of the council jointly determine policy and initiate legislation; respond to constituents' calls and letters; hold community meetings, and attend civic organization meetings.

Since the inception of term limits four years ago the council has become more reactive than proactive: fewer projects are initiated by the council, but members remain active in dealing with constituent complaints. Council district projects are controlled by the mayor, but council members challenge the mayor, using the need to garner votes of the majority as leverage.

The council meets in two weekly session, each with a distinct format, although unfinished business is addressed at both. One of the session is largely dedicated to receiving scheduled presentations "by persons, groups, or organizations regarding matters of public interest". A \$10 fine may be levied upon any member failing to attend a meeting without just cause.

**Mayor (/council president).** The mayor is the presiding officer of the council. As council president, the mayor prepares the council agenda and votes as a council member, but has no veto power. The mayor also creates council committees and citizen commissions, and appoints their members; historically respecting council members' requests for committee assignments. As the city's chief executive officer, the mayor also appoints all department directors

**Council vice-president.** The mayor selects a mayor pro tempore from the elected council membership, subject to council confirmation. The mayor pro tempore fills in for the mayor in his or her absence, in both the executive and legislative roles. The mayor pro tempore is also in charge of the council's central administrative staff, which also performs a limited research function.

## INDIANAPOLIS

**Council of the Whole.** The council of the whole can address a proposal without the proposal going through the council committee process. A quorum is required to convene any council or committee meeting.

**Council president.** The president is elected by council members, with no term limit, to preside at council meetings. The president does not serve as deputy mayor. The majority leader and minority leader assist the president with duties. No special resources are available to the president.

## JACKSONVILLE

**Council.** The City Council is the legislative branch of the consolidated government of Jacksonville and Duval County. It acts through ordinances or resolutions to set broad policy for the city, adopt an annual budget, approve all amendments to the comprehensive plan, and rezone real property.

**Committee of the whole.** Council may resolve itself into a committee of the whole in all cases. The president leaves the chair after appointing a chairman to preside over the committee. All matters referred to the committee of the whole are considered and reported under the same rules as for council committees.

**Council president.** Elected by council to a four year term, the president is the council's presiding officer and parliamentarian. The president cannot debate any matters before the council, but may offer explanatory and illustrative information. The president appoints all committees and designates the chair and vice-chair, and recommends to council the name of a person to fill any position that requires council appointment.

**Council vice-president.** The vice president presides over the council on behalf of the president, and may be assigned to supervision of particular administrative functions by the president.

## KING COUNTY

**Council.** The council is the policy-determining body of the county and has all legislative powers of the county. The council passes ordinances to levy taxes; appropriate revenue; adopt operating budgets and capital improvement programs; organize county departments; adopt comprehensive community and functional plans and policies; establish the county compensation system; adopt regulations regarding public safety, public health, and zoning; and authorize contracts that commit the county to expenditures from future appropriations. The council passes motions to confirm appointments by the executive, organize the legislative branch, make declarations of policy which do not have the force of law, request information or actions from other county

agencies, authorize grant applications, authorize the executive to enter into inter-local agreements, and dispose of surplus real property.

**Council president.** The chairperson of the council presides over meetings, sets the council agenda, expedites debate and passage of routine motions, and facilitates the will of the majority. The chair speaks to points of order, inquiry, or information; decides all points of order; appoints membership to all committees; and is responsible for council resources, budget, operation, and organizational structure.

## MILWAUKEE

**Council.** The Common Council exercises all policy making and legislative powers of the city, including the adoption of ordinances and resolutions and approval of the annual budget, which it may change from the original recommendations of the mayor. The council elects the city clerk, and confirms the mayor's appointments of department directors.

Aldermen/women of the Common Council serve both as legislators, and as district administrators, responsible to citizens for the services they receive. The mayor can veto council actions, but the council can overturn the veto with a two-thirds vote.

**Committee of the Whole.** The council goes into the Committee of the Whole to hear from speakers other than members: the mayor, department representatives, and citizens.

**Council president.** The president is elected by fellow members at the beginning of the four year term, and is not subject to term limits. The president appoints all committee members and designates chair and vice chair, and can change them at will. The president also appoints city employees and private citizens to various city boards. The current president has been in office for 29 years.

## MINNEAPOLIS

**Council.** The council governs through its legislative, administrative, and financial power over many city functions. The council adopts ordinances that provide for government and order of the city, regulate public and private activities, control the uses of property, prevent crime, and generally ensure public health and welfare. By adopting resolutions to express policy or direct certain administrative actions, the council levies taxes, passes on assessments, has charge of city elections, licenses businesses, and exercises budgetary and policy control over city departments. The public is not permitted to address the council at its meeting

**Committees.** Departments report to the council through assigned committees. Committee members are appointed by a majority vote of the council..

**President.** Elected by council, the president chairs meetings, preserves order and decorum, and decides questions of order. The president also serves as the deputy mayor. The president establishes the times of standing and special committee meetings.

**Vice president.** The vice-president presides over the Council of the Whole.

## NASHVILLE

**Council.** The committee of the whole adopts the annual operating budget, appropriations, zoning, ratification of some contracts, general legislative matters, and tax rates. Meetings of the Metropolitan Council are broadcast.

**Executive Committee.** The executive committee of the council consists of the vice mayor, the chairman of all standing committees, and the president pro tempore of the council. Each member is entitled to one vote regardless of the number of positions a council member may hold.

**Vice-mayor.** The vice-mayor presides over council meetings, assigns legislation to committees, appoints all members and chairs of the standing committees, and may appoint special committees as circumstances require. The vice mayor votes only in case of a

tie. A president pro tempore of the council is elected yearly by the council to preside in the vice-mayor's absence.

**Mayor.** The mayor or the mayor's representative has the privilege of the floor for the purpose of discussing matters under consideration by the council. Members of the public may address council by consent of a majority of council members present.

## PITTSBURGH

**Council.** The council makes the laws governing the city, appropriates money for the operation of the city, and carries out its duties as established by the Home Rule Charter and state laws. Council and committee meetings are open to the public. All council members serve on all standing committees.

**Council president.** Elected to an unlimited term with no additional resources, the president is not regarded as the deputy mayor. The president serves as the chair of legislative meetings and public hearings, schedules all meetings, and posts agendas. The president preserves order and decorum, designates order for speaking, decides all questions of order, imposes fines (\$5 - \$20) for breaches of conduct or unexcused absences, refers issues to committees, designates the committee chairpersons, and is ex-officio member of all special committees, which s/he creates.

**Council vice-president.** The president pro tempore is elected by the membership to serve as vice president in the president's absence.

## ST. LOUIS

**Board of Aldermen.** St. Louis's legislative body is comprised of 29 members; one representative from each of the 28 wards and a board president who is elected at large. The board is approves and enacts ordinances, reviews policy matters, and adopts the annual budget. In 1998 each ward will receive \$312,000 toward neighborhood improvement projects.

**President.** The president, elected at-large, is one of three members of the city's Board of Estimate and Apportionment.

## **SAN FRANCISCO**

**Board of Supervisors.** The Board of Supervisors enacts laws, confirms the mayor's appointment of the city administrator, and reviews and adopts the mayor's proposed budget. The board may increase or decrease any proposed expenditure in any fund, as long as the changes do not exceed the total expenditures proposed by the mayor. The board can be involved in department administration except with regard to personnel and contracting. All board meetings are open, and a "sunshine ordinance" requires public notice of all meetings.

Although the Board of Supervisors have been elected at large since 1980, a new charter adopted in 1996 brings back district elections in the 2000 election.

**Board president.** The member who received the most votes in the last election becomes the president of the board for the next two years, when the other half of the board comes up for election. The president presides at meetings, assigns members to standing committees (usually by seniority), and assigns legislation to committees.

**City Administrator.** In 1996 a new charter replaced the independent chief administrative officer with a city administrator, who is appointed by the mayor and confirmed by the Board of Supervisors. The city administrator is responsible for administrative services within the executive branch, including policies regarding indebtedness, coordination of all capital improvement projects, bond measures, and awards contracts., the new charter reduced the authority of city department commissions comprised of citizens to advisory roles, and expanded the role of the mayor and the Board of Supervisors in determining budgets and setting policy.



## Attachment 2: Internet Homepage and E-mail Information

City	Home page address	Council		Agenda	Rules	List of committees or committee members	Info. on Mayor	City/County Code (home page or link)
		e-mail*	contact info.					
Baltimore	None							
Boston	www.ci.boston.ma.us	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Buffalo	www.ci.buffalo.ny.us	Y	Y				Y	
Chicago	www.ci.chi.il.us	N	Y	N	N	N	Y	N
Cleveland	None							
Columbus	gopher://data.freenet.columbus.oh.us:70/11/ governmentcenter/cityof columbus	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N
Denver	www.infodenver.denver.co.us	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y
Detroit	None							
Houston	www.ci.houston.tx.us	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N
Indianapolis	www.indygov.org/index.html	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N
Jacksonville	www.itd.ci.jax.fl.us	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
King County	www.metrokc.gov	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Los Angeles	www.ci.la.ca.us	Y	Y	Y	?	Y	Y	?
Milwaukee	www.ci.mil.wi.us	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N
Minneapolis	www.ci.mps.mn.us	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Nashville	www.nashville.org	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Philadelphia	www.phila.gov	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N
Pittsburgh	None							
San Diego	www.sannet.gov	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
San Francisco	www.ci.sf.ca.us	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
St. Louis	None							

\* some or all council members have e-mail links on the home page